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MARRYBELL MADURO
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6:30 - 8:30pm

MONDAY:

ANGELA FLORES
VIOLINIST
6:30 - 8:30pm

TUESDAY:

JEAN PAUL
SAXOPHONIST
6:30 - 8:30pm

WEDNESDAY:

EDDIE KROON
SINGER 4:00 - 6:00pm

MAILLEYN ALVARADO
VIOLINIST 6:30 - 8:30pm

KARAOKE 9:00 - 11:00pm

THURSDAY:

MARRYBELL MADURO
SINGER
6:30 - 8:30pm

FRIDAY:

RICKY THOMAS
GUITARIST
7:00 - 9:00pm

SATURDAY:

EDDIE KROON
SINGER
4:00 - 6:00pm

ANGELA FLORES
VIOLINIST
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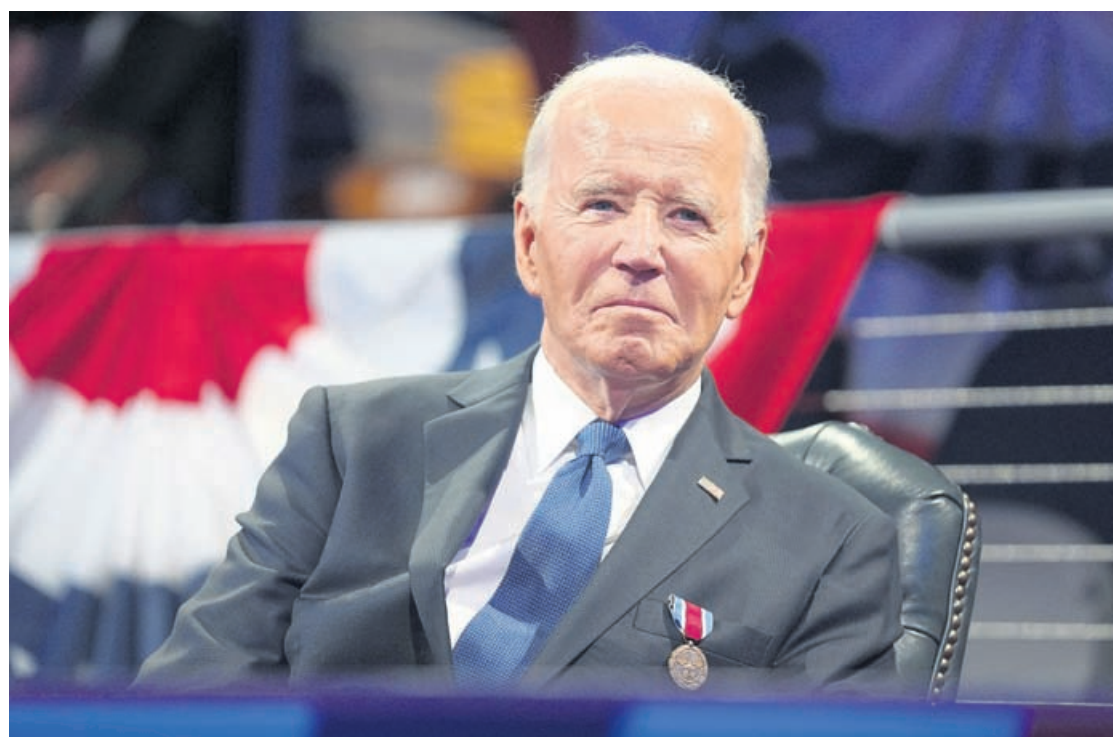
Biden sets record by commuting sentences of nearly 2,500 people convicted on nonviolent drug charges

By **WILL WEISSERT**

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Joe Biden announced Friday that he was commuting the sentences of almost 2,500 people convicted of nonviolent drug offenses, using his final days in office on a flurry of clemency actions meant to nullify prison terms he deemed too harsh. The recent round of clemency gives Biden the presidential record for most individual pardons and commutations issued. The Democrat said he is seeking to undo “disproportionately long sentences compared to the sentences they would receive today under current law, policy, and practice.”

“Today’s clemency action provides relief for individuals who received lengthy sentences based on discredited distinctions between crack and powder cocaine, as well as outdated sentencing enhancements for drug crimes,” Biden said in a statement. “This action is an important step toward righting historic wrongs, correcting sen-



President Joe Biden attends the Department of Defense Commander in Chief farewell ceremony at Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall, Jan. 16, 2025, in Arlington, Va.

Associated Press

tencing disparities, and providing deserving individuals the opportunity to return to their families and communities after spending far too much time behind bars.” The White House did not release the names of those receiving commutations. Still, Biden said more could yet be coming, promising

to use the time before President-elect Donald Trump is inaugurated Monday to “continue to review additional commutations and pardons.”

The move comes as Biden continues to weigh whether to issue sweeping pardons for officials and allies who the White House fears

could be unjustly targeted by Trump’s administration. Though presidential pardoning powers are absolute, such a preemptive move would be a novel and risky use of the president’s extraordinary constitutional power.

Shaneva D. McReynolds, president of FAMM, also

known as Families Against Mandatory Minimums, said that Biden “is leaving office with a lasting legacy on criminal justice reform.”

“With today’s announcement, he has set a standard for presidential clemency and addressed decades-long injustices in our criminal justice system,” McReynolds said in a statement.

Sarah Gersten, executive director and general counsel of the Last Prisoner Project, said Biden’s action offers “hope not just for those freed today, but for all the individuals still incarcerated for cannabis and their families that have been impacted by the War on Drugs.”

Friday’s announcement follows Biden’s commutations last month of the sentences of roughly 1,500 people who were released from prison and placed on home confinement during the coronavirus pandemic, as well as the pardoning of 39 Americans convicted of nonviolent crimes. That was the largest single-day act of clemency in modern history. □

Trump’s swearing-in will move inside the Capitol Rotunda because of intense cold weather

By **ZEKE MILLER AP**

White House Correspondent

WASHINGTON (AP) — President-elect Donald Trump will take the oath of office from inside the Capitol Rotunda on Monday due to

forecasts of intense cold weather, upending months of meticulous planning for a massive outdoor event with crowds sprawling down the National Mall.

“The weather forecast for Washington, D.C., with the

windchill factor, could take temperatures into severe record lows,” Trump posted on his Truth Social platform. “There is an Arctic blast sweeping the Country. I don’t want to see people hurt, or injured, in any way.” The Rotunda is prepared as an alternative for each inauguration in the event of inclement weather. The swearing-in was last moved indoors in 1985, when President Ronald Reagan began his second term. Monday’s forecast calls for the lowest Inauguration Day temperatures since that day.

Outgoing President Joe Biden, members of Congress and some other dignitaries and notable guests will be able to view the ceremony from inside the Capitol Rotunda. But

even if they are standing shoulder-to-shoulder packing the Rotunda as in 1985, many will be forced to watch the swearing-in from elsewhere. Alternate plans were being devised to accommodate as many guests as possible. More than 250,000 guests are ticketed to view the inauguration from around the Capitol grounds and tens of thousands more were expected to be in general admission areas or to line the inaugural parade route from the Capitol to the White House.

Trump said some supporters would be able to watch the ceremony from Washington’s Capital One Arena on Monday, a day after he plans to hold a rally there. He said he would visit the arena, which has a capac-

ity of about 20,000, after his swearing-in, and host a modified inaugural parade there. Trump said other inaugural events, including the Sunday rally and his participation in three official inaugural balls on Monday night, would take place as scheduled.

The U.S. Secret Service, which leads the security planning for the inauguration, said it was working with organizers to “adapt” its plans for the event due to the scheduling changes. The National Weather Service is predicting the temperature to be around 22 degrees (minus-6 Celsius) at noon during the swearing-in, the coldest since Reagan’s second inauguration saw temperatures plunge to 7 degrees (minus-14 Celsius). □



Workers continue with the finishing touches on the presidential reviewing stand on Pennsylvania outside the White House Thursday, Jan. 16, 2025, in Washington, ahead of President-elect Donald Trump’s inauguration.

Associated Press

Russia and Iran sign a partnership treaty to deepen their ties in the face of Western sanctions

By VLADIMIR ISACHENKOV
Associated Press

MOSCOW (AP) — Russian President Vladimir Putin and his Iranian counterpart, Masoud Pezeshkian, signed a broad cooperation pact Friday as their countries deepened their partnership in the face of stinging Western sanctions. Russian and Iranian officials say the “comprehensive strategic partnership treaty” covers all areas from trade and military cooperation to science, education and culture. The 20-year treaty could be extended further.

Putin praised the deal as a “real breakthrough, creating conditions for the stable and sustainable development of Russia, Iran and the entire region.”

He said the amount of trade and economic cooperation was still insufficient, voicing hope the new treaty will help clear bureaucratic hurdles and expand ties. The Russian leader added that the countries are trying to resolve technical obstacles to advance planned projects to ship Russian natural gas to Iran via Azerbaijan and build transport corridors to Iranian ports in the Gulf.

Pezeshkian said the projects are feasible, adding that experts were working to resolve remaining obstacles.

“We witness a new chapter of strategic relations,” the Iranian president said, adding that the countries were set to expand trade ties and also boost the “level of security cooperation.”

His visit came ahead of Monday’s inauguration of President-elect Donald Trump, who has pledged to broker peace in Ukraine and take a tougher stance on Iran, which is grappling with growing economic problems and other challenges, including military setbacks in its sphere of influence across the Middle East.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov dismissed any link



Russian President Vladimir Putin, right, and Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian attend a signing ceremony at the Kremlin in Moscow, Russia, Friday, Jan. 17, 2025.

Associated Press

with Trump’s inauguration, saying that Pezeshkian’s visit had been planned long ago.

The signing of the treaty with Iran follows last year’s pact with North Korea countries once identified by former President George W. Bush, along with Iraq, as “the Axis of Evil.”

Unlike the treaty with Pyongyang, the pact with Tehran doesn’t envisage mutual assistance in case of aggression. But it does oblige each country not to offer any military or any other aid to an aggressor attacking another party.

Moscow and Tehran, which both have faced massive Western sanctions, agreed in the document to coordinate their response to such restrictions and facilitate payments in national currencies. The pact also envisions the exchange of intelligence information and cooperation on security issues.

Welcoming Pezeshkian as they sat down for talks, Putin said the new treaty will “give an additional impetus to practically all areas of our cooperation.”

Pezeshkian, who met Putin for the third time since coming to power in July, said the documents form

a “solid foundation for our forward movement.”

“We do consider our relations with you as vital, sensitive and strategic, and we are on this path strongly,” he said.

The Iranian president emphasized that countries in the region should resolve their own problems themselves, adding in an apparent reference to the U.S. that the presence of outside forces will only exacerbate tensions and destabilize the situation.

“They come from another side of the world to make

chaos in the region,” he said. “These ties will defuse their plot, definitely.”

Russia’s ties with Iran have grown closer after Putin sent troops into Ukraine in February 2022. Ukraine and the West have accused Tehran of providing Moscow with hundreds of drones for use to attack Ukraine, which Moscow and Tehran have denied. Pezeshkian spoke in support of prospective Russia-Ukraine peace talks, saying that “war is not a solution” and urging the West to “avoid imposing

excessive demands” and acknowledge others’ “security concerns.”

Last year, Iran joined the BRICS bloc of developing economies and Pezeshkian attended its summit, which was hosted by Russia in Kazan.

Russia and Iran, which had troubled relations in the past, developed cordial ties after the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, with Moscow emerging as a key trade partner and supplier of weapons and technologies for Tehran, which has faced bruising international sanctions.

Russia built Iran’s first nuclear plant that was launched in 2013 and is building two more nuclear reactors there.

Russia was part of the 2015 deal between Iran and six nuclear powers offering sanctions relief for Tehran in exchange for curbing its atomic program, and the Kremlin offered political support to Iran when the U.S. unilaterally withdrew from the agreement during Trump’s first term.

Russia and Iran also pooled their efforts to shore up Bashar Assad’s government during Syria’s civil war, but failed to prevent his downfall last month after a lightning offensive by the opposition.

Assad and his family fled to Russia. □



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Visit the island's hidden natural pools



(Oranjestad)—Amongst the countless beaches surrounding the island that are well-known and frequently visited, there are an additional two “hidden” natural pools that are situated in the northern coast of the island, two ideal stops in your tour itinerary.

Conchi (Natural Pool)

For many years, Conchi was the only natural pool that we had on the island. Located in the Arikok National Park, near Boca Keto and the Daimari Ranch, Conchi—also known “Cura di Turtuga (Turtle's Cove) or just Natural Pool—is reachable with any 4x4 vehicle or by foot if you're up for a long hike. However, since it is part of the National Park, you must first get permission from park management to enter. You would have to purchase a day pass, and re-

ceive a wristband as proof of payment. Once you've completed that, you are set!

If you decide to hike from the entrance of the Arikok National Park, this is also possible: do bring plenty of protective clothing and enough water and food—it could take you up to three hours to hike there!

However, when you eventually do get there, you will be greeted with crystal blue water surrounded by a natural rock formation that protects you from the wild waves on the other side. Though the pool is located on the northern side of the island (where the sea is largely rough and largely no suitable for swimming), the pool itself is very calm. It's also relatively deep, and you can climb up the rocks and jump in!

Cave Pool

This relatively new pool appeared just a few years ago, when a part of the dried up coral floor broke off and created a partition between the ocean and what is now the natural pool that is hidden there. Because it's still so new, there is no official name for it, but most people just call it the cave pool.

Just like the Conchi, the new natural pool is situated on the northern coast of Aruba. However,



this pool is much easier to reach with any type of vehicle, and there is no hiking needed. This spot has also become a regular stop for touring visitors.

When you get there, maybe you won't be able to spot the pool immediately, because you will probably notice the moon-shaped lagoon where wild northern waves crash into each other. Sounds scary, but if you look down on your right, you'll see a calm, crystal blue little pool in the corner. To get there, you have to climb down some stairs. Be careful when climbing down and follow the instructions of your tour guide if you have one.

And just like Conchi, this pool also has a jumping spot, and a rope to climb back up the boulder.

Picture of cave pool is credited
to RockaBeach Tours

Aruba's Bocas: home to the rarest fossil reefs on the planet!

(Oranjestad)—If you've been to the northern coast of Aruba already, you've probably noticed how the ground differs entirely from the sandy beaches on the southern part of the island. These hard surfaces, with sharp bumps and holes are actually fossilized coral reefs, of which its growth and changes can be traced back to the last glacial period.



research on these fossilized coral reefs at the University of Aruba. Their focus for their research included studying the health and formation patterns of these coral reefs, and to investigate how these reefs have responded and can respond to fluctuating sea levels or extreme weather, like hurricanes and tsunamis.

On May 30 2023, geoscientists, Dr. Patrick Boyden from the Marum research faculty at the University of Bremen, Prof. dr. Alessio Rovere from the Ca' Foscari University of Venice and Prof. dr. Gianfranco Scicchitano, from the University of Bari Aldo Moro, presented their

Through underwater and land surveillance, and 3D models of the reefs, they were able to narrow down when these formations started to take place. They were also able to track the fluctuation of sea levels during the past hundred or even thousands of years, and the effects that this fluctuation has had on the coral reefs of the windward side of Aruba.

These findings can certainly put things into perspective. The ground on which we have walked many times in the northern part of the island hold such rich history, history that dates back to a time that most of us cannot even imagine. As the scientists themselves have

pointed out, these fossilized reefs on the windward side are truly an incredible and rare remnant of geological history, as they provide a clear view of how these reefs have formed.

This research is also important for the future of coral reefs on the island. By studying rising sea levels and climate impact on these coral reefs, we are able to take concrete action in protecting and preserving our coral reefs. So, if you are ever visiting one of the bocas or driving along the northern part of the island, please be conscious to help protect our natural historical remnant. Oh, and wear (coral-friendly) sunscreen! ☐

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Aruba: Best Caribbean Island to Buy Real Estate



Overview

The Caribbean real estate market is witnessing an unprecedented boom, driven by its proximity to the US, Canada, and Europe, its laid-back lifestyle, and year-round sunshine. Whether you're considering a permanent relocation, seeking a holiday retreat, or eyeing a lucrative investment opportunity, there's an island in the Caribbean that perfectly suits your needs. However, choosing the best Caribbean island to buy real estate requires a deep dive and a thorough understanding of the markets.

Stability and growth are key when discussing Caribbean real estate. The region has consistently demonstrated resilience and upward property value trends, making it an attractive place for investment. Caribbean real estate offers not only a peaceful retreat but also the potential for significant appreciation and rental income.

It makes sense to consider investing in real estate with bond interest rates declining and the stock market at a historic high. Aruba real estate shows great promise when analyzed individually, due to its location outside the hurricane belt, its established infrastructure, and its international reputation as a high-end destination. We particularly favor prime locations, especially those with views of the Caribbean Sea.

Aruba meets all the criteria for investing in Caribbean real estate

- 1. Potential for Price Appreciation** Aruba's real estate is poised for significant growth, as its prices remain well below other comparable islands like the Bahamas, Barbados, Turks & Caicos, St. Martin, St. Kitts & Nevis, or Puerto Rico, and even South Florida. There is a moratorium on new condominium developments and hotels, as the government is prioritizing en-

vironmental protection over-growth and closely monitoring the island's carrying capacity. Aruba is aiming for quality over quantity, focusing on higher-income tourists. However, demand for oceanfront condos continues to rise. The potential for price appreciation is clear, with supply being constrained and demand high.

- 2. Flight Accessibility and Location** Aruba offers over 16 daily flights to and from the US and Canada, reaching 28 direct destinations, including Europe and Latin America. Plus, it offers the convenience of clearing US immigration before boarding return flights.
- 3. Economic and Political Stability** As part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Aruba benefits from a sound legal system

and adherence to the rule of law.

- 4. Banking and Financing** Banking and financing processes for foreign investors are streamlined, with attractive mortgage loan rates available.
- 5. Safety and Security** An island's security measures and overall safety record can significantly affect real estate values. Aruba ranks No. 1 in this regard.
- 6. No Currency nor Capital Restrictions** The US dollar is widely used in Aruba, simplifying transactions for international investors. There's no need to worry about fluctuating exchange rates, as the Aruban Florin is pegged to the dollar, and there are no capital restrictions. You can forecast expenses and returns without the unpredictability of currency fluctuations.
- 7. Established Caribbean Markets** Exploring established Caribbean real estate markets is a wise starting point when diving into Caribbean real estate investing. These markets offer a mix of stability and luxury that attracts a steady flow of investors and tourists alike.

Don't miss out. The time to invest in Aruban real estate is now! ☐



Feeling parched? Grab refreshment by the side of the road!

(Oranjestad)—Touring the island in the blistering heat can leave one feeling rather thirsty and looking to cool off. Luckily there are a few stands along the roads of Aruba that can offer you just what you need: a nice, refreshing beverage!

These "coconut stands" can be found at several locations on the island, where you can cool off with delicious smoothies, drinks, snacks, and of course, fresh coconuts! Per-

fect during family outings around the island, these stands can be found in the following locations:

- Near the red Anchor in San Nicolas
- On the Linear Park in Oranjestad (in front of airport runway)
- At the California Light House hill
- Bushiribana Gold Mill Ruin
- Bushiribana Beach (Near the Ling & Song Supermarket)





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ARUBA TODAY NEWS

CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

1 Cell
feature

5 Wave's
top

10 Homer
opus

12 Knight's
weapon

13 Dance
music

14 Buenos —
Luau

15 Luau
instrument

16 Jewelry
buy

18 Solving
tool

20 "My word!"
Will name

23 Bungle
Speaker's

24 Speaker's
stand

26 Water
whirl

28 Gun, as
a motor

29 Commotion

31 Summer
in Lyons

32 Group
of five

36 Fine

39 Alien craft

40 Fuming

41 Flynn
of films

43 Herd
member

44 Buffalo
hockey
player

45 Far from
wordy

46 Departs

DOWN

1 Raise an
auction
price

2 Similar

3 Out of
bed

4 Pouchlike
part

5 Highlands
family

6 Foray

7 Furious

8 Stage
decor

9 Fragrance
counter

11 Most
foolish

17 Yale
player

19 Greek X
flights

22 Late
Cold

24 Cold
War

25 Wrong-
doer

27 Singer
Henley

28 Meal

30 Make a
choice

33 Engine
booster

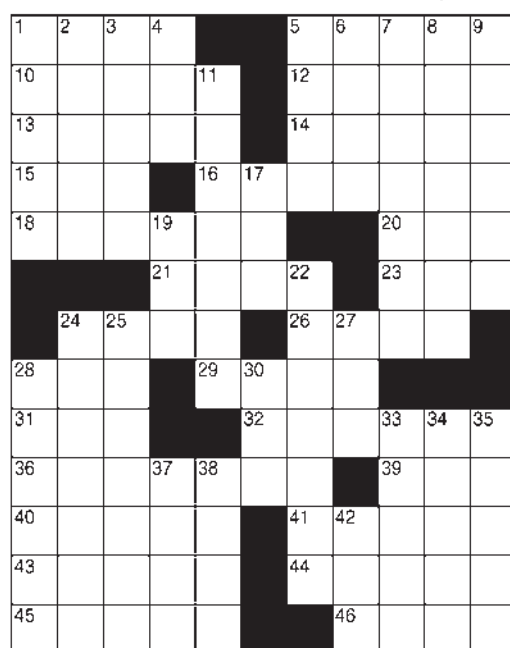
34 Earlier,
quaintly

35 Metes
out

37 Son of
Zeus

38 Harp's
cousin

42 Cloth
scrap



1-18

AXYDLBAAXR
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

1-18

CRYPTOQUOTE

ARDIR SEGIG VKO DIG, SXRE
SEDR VKO EDWG. HDPG
AKHGREXTM KQ XR DTN TGWGI
YG ADRXAQXGN. — MGKIMG
SDAEXTMRKT BDIWGI

Cryptoquote: THE NEW YEAR
STANDS BEFORE US, LIKE A CHAPTER IN A
BOOK, WAITING TO BE WRITTEN. — MELODY
BEATTIE



Sarah Baus, left, of Charleston, S.C., and Tiffany Cianci, who says she is a "long-form educational content creator," livestream to TikTok outside the Supreme Court, on Jan. 10, 2025, in Washington.

Associated Press

Supreme Court backs law banning TikTok if it's not sold by its Chinese parent company

By MARK SHERMAN

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Supreme Court on Friday unanimously upheld the federal law banning TikTok beginning Sunday unless it's sold by its China-based parent company, holding that the risk to national security posed by its ties to China overcomes concerns about limiting speech by the app or its 170 million users in the United States.

A sale does not appear imminent and, although experts have said the app will not disappear from existing users' phones once the law takes effect, new users won't be able to download it and updates won't be available. That will eventually render the app unworkable, the Justice Department has said in court filings.

The decision came against the backdrop of unusual political agitation by President-elect Donald Trump, who vowed that he could negotiate a solution, and the administration of President Joe Biden, which has signaled it won't enforce the law which was passed with overwhelming bipartisan support beginning Sunday, his final full day in office.

"TikTok should remain available to Americans, but simply under American ownership or other ownership that addresses the national security concerns identified by Congress in developing this law," White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre said in a statement, noting that actions to implement the law will fall to the new administration. Trump, mindful of TikTok's popularity, and his own 14.7 million followers on the app, finds himself on the opposite side of the argument from prominent Senate Republicans who fault TikTok's Chinese owner for not finding a buyer before now. Trump said in a Truth Social post shortly before the decision was issued that TikTok was among the topics in his conversation Friday with Chinese leader Xi Jinping.

TikTok CEO Shou Zi Chew, who is expected to attend Trump's inauguration, used the app to thank the incoming president for "his commitment to work with us to keep TikTok available."

It's unclear what options are open to Trump, a Republican, once he is sworn in as president on Monday. The law allowed for a 90-day pause in the restrictions on the app if there had been progress toward a sale before it took effect. □

Coco Gauff and Aryna Sabalenka move closer to an Australian Open rematch



Coco Gauff of the U.S. plays a forehand return to Leylah Fernandez of Canada during their third round match at the Australian Open tennis championship in Melbourne, Australia, Friday, Jan. 17, 2025.

By **HOWARD FENDRICH**
AP Tennis Writer

MELBOURNE, Australia (AP)

— Coco Gauff still hasn't lost a match or even at set at the Australian Open or, actually, this season. She moved into the fourth round at Melbourne Park with a straightforward 6-4, 6-2 victory over 2021 U.S. Open runner-up Leylah Fernandez on Friday night. While there have been plenty of surprises in the men's bracket so far, most of the top women have progressed through the draw without an issue. That includes wins on Friday for No. 1 Aryna Sabalenka, who is the two-time defending champion in Australia, No. 3 Gauff, No. 11 Paula Badosa and No. 14 Mirra Andrejeva.

However, No. 7 seed Jessica Pegula was ousted by world No. 55 Olga Danilovic in two sets.

The Serbian player beat the U.S. Open runner-up 7-6 (3), 6-1 after she hit 28 winners and saved all six break points she faced. It was Danilovic's third career win over a top-10 player.

Naomi Osaka, a two-time champion in Australia, stopped playing because

of a strained abdominal muscle after dropping the first set of her match against Tokyo Olympics gold medalist Belinda Bencic.

Men's winners in third-round action included No. 2 Alexander Zverev, No. 3 Carlos Alcaraz, No. 7 Novak Djokovic, No. 12 Tommy Paul and No. 15 Jack Draper. Djokovic who won 10 of his 24 Grand Slam titles at the Australian Open overcame some mid-match breathing trouble to dismiss No. 26 Tomas Machac 6-1, 6-4, 6-4 at night.

"I think I played really well," Djokovic said. "I'm very happy with my game."

Alejandro Davidovich Fokina had a much more difficult path, coming back from two sets down for the second match in a row and saving two match points to sneak past 19-year-old Jakub Mensik 3-6, 4-6, 7-6 (7), 6-4, 6-2. Davidovich Fokina is the first man since 2005 to win twice in a row in Australia after falling behind 0-2 in sets.

"In all these years I had a lot of up-and-downs," Davidovich Fokina said. "I had decided this year to fight every point."

Alcaraz's next opponent will be No. 15 Jack Draper or Aleksandar Vukic.

A year ago, 2023 U.S. Open champion Gauff had her best run in Melbourne, getting to the semifinals before bowing out against Sabalenka, who extended her winning streak at the tournament to 17 matches by eliminating Clara Tauson 7-6 (5), 6-4 on Friday.

Like Gauff, Sabalenka is unbeaten in the early going in 2025. They could meet in the semifinals again this time around next weekend.

Gauff needed just 75 minutes to get past Fernandez, a left-hander who was seeded 30th. Gauff was broken just once and compiled an 18-7 advantage in total winners.

It was Gauff's second recent win over Fernandez, after beating her in the United Cup team competition. That is part of Gauff's 8-0 record, 16-0 in sets, so far this season.

That made this one "harder," Gauff said, "because she knows what to expect, and I definitely think she played a little bit different today."

That prompted Gauff to

switch some things up, too, as she seeks her second major championship. She's tweaked her coaching staff and altered her serving and forehand mechanics a bit after being a tad disappointed with her Grand Slam performances in 2024 even if the season did end with a title at the WTA Finals.

"Tennis feels so high stakes, but it's really not. I'm so lucky to do what I do also get paid doing it," said Gauff, a 20-year-old from Florida.

"My biggest thing I learned last year is just not to take anything for granted," Gauff said, "and just realized this time is going to go by so fast. I'm just trying to enjoy it while I'm here."

Neither Sabalenka nor Tauson served all that well in Rod Laver Arena. Maybe it was the sun. Maybe it was the wind. Maybe it was slower court conditions.

The first seven games of the match were all breaks, and Tauson was the first to hold, leading 5-3. But that's when Sabalenka began to get going.

"I am super happy I was able to push myself," Sabalenka said. "I told myself, 'Well, girl, you are tough.' So many times, I thought I was done."

Next for her is a matchup with 17-year-old Andrejeva, a 6-2, 1-6, 6-2 winner against No. 23 Magdalena Frech. Badosa barely emerged to beat No. 17 Marta Kostyuk 6-4, 4-6, 6-3, and 2021 French Open runner-up Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova, the 27th seed, defeated Laura Siegemund 6-1, 6-2. Siegemund took a big step back after beating No. 5 Qinwen Zheng, who was the runner-up to Sabalenka in Australia last January and won a gold medal at the Paris Olympics in August, in her last match.

Alcaraz ceded a set for the first time this week but beat Nuno Borges 6-2, 6-4, 6-7 (3), 6-2. Zverev defeated Jacob Fearnley 6-3, 6-4, 6-4, and Paul got past Robert Carballes Baena 7-6

(0), 6-2, 6-0. Draper rallied to beat Aleksandar Vukic 6-4, 2-6, 5-7, 7-6 (5), 7-6 (8) and set up a fourth-round meeting with Alcaraz. □



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STOP
Violence Against Women

Commanders kicker Zane Gonzalez welcomes his viral moment as a chance to educate about OCD

By **STEPHEN WHYNO**

AP Sports Writer

ASHBURN, Va. (AP) — A national television audience watched Zane Gonzalez adjust his socks on the sideline and fix his hair multiple times before putting his helmet on and taking the field to kick the winning field goal in an NFL playoff game Sunday night. Those watching did not see Gonzalez as a kid writing and rewriting papers and taking walks outside with his father or playing soccer to get his mind off homework he could not finish. Only his wife saw him set and reset his alarm clock about 100 times Wednesday night to make sure it was right.

All of it stems from the obsessive-compulsive disorder Gonzalez has lived with his entire life, from childhood to now being a kicker for the Washington Commanders. Making the field goal to deliver the franchise's first postseason victory in nearly two decades has allowed Gonzalez to share his story, hear from others, correct any misconceptions and shed some light on what it is like to play professional football with OCD.

"Anybody that has OCD understands that mental battle's not easy," Gonzalez said after practice Thursday. "You truly think it's the end of the world or what-



Washington Commanders place kicker Zane Gonzalez (47) celebrates after an NFL football Wild Card playoff game against the Tampa Bay Buccaneers, Jan. 12, 2025, in Tampa, Fla.

Associated Press

ever that situation is that you're going through that you think the worst possible situation can come of it. And even if it's the most unrealistic thing ever, that's just kind of the way you think about it sometimes." Gonzalez, who banked the kick off the right upright and through as time expired to beat Tampa Bay and send the Commanders to the next round at Detroit, feels he has gotten better at handling the uncontrollable, recurring thoughts and fears that come with the anxiety disorder. At 29,

he is more confident and has been able to shrug off some of the social media attention that followed his viral moment.

"As a kid you're more adamant about trying to hide it and trying not to show people," Gonzalez said. "You're just like, 'Oh, I don't want people to think whatever, this or that.' I mean, you saw the reaction. People were always like, 'Oh, he's nervous.' It's like, OK, it's not nervous. It's just kind of a tick-type deal. ... Being a professional athlete it's like, 'Hey, I'm here, I'm in

the big moment, big stage, do what you do, make the kick.'"

After he made the kick, Gonzalez's wife, Lizzy, posted a TikTok responding to people making fun of her husband's OCD. It came up on "The Pat McAfee Show," with the retired punter-turned-TV star talking about how much of the position was mental and how kickers develop routines to get in the right frame of mind.

Gonzalez's pre-kick mannerisms are nothing new, and he said his wife and

teammates have seen it plenty over the years at practices and in games.

"I've seen the hair-fixing and adjusting his shoe. I never thought anything of it," long snapper Tyler Ott said. "But when he gets a minute on screen of leading up to the kick to send us to the first playoff win in 18, 19 years, it got some more attention."

In recent days, Gonzalez, Ott and punter/holder Tress Way have made light of the hair-fixing, laughing about it after receiving an award in a team meeting and mimicking it during practice. Coach Dan Quinn knew about Gonzalez's OCD and said he was glad at this opportunity to make it a subject of proper discussion.

"If that is a chance for him to assist one other person, I think that takes just a lot of courage and tells you a lot about who he is, not just as a ballplayer but as a man," Quinn said.

Way, Washington's longest-tenured player who finally got to celebrate his first playoff win, has enjoyed every bit of teaming with Gonzalez, who he called "about as low maintenance as they come."

"It's fun to play with a guy like that and to be working with a guy like that," Way said. □

Ryan Reynolds and Rob McElhenney in group that buys Colombian soccer club La Equidad



Ryan Reynolds attends a ceremony honoring Kevin Feige with a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame, July 25, 2024, in Los Angeles.

Associated Press

By **ASTRID SUAREZ**

Associated Press

BOGOTA, Colombia (AP) — Ryan Reynolds and Rob McElhenney made another foray into soccer team ownership Thursday as part of an investment group that acquired Colombian club La Equidad.

The Wrexham co-owners are shareholders in the group led by Al Tylis, who is co-chairman of Mexican club Necaxa, and Sam Porter, who is a Necaxa board member. La Equidad, a Bogota club founded in the 1980s, said the purchase was approved by the country's professional soccer league organization.

Other investors include actress Eva Longoria as well as baseball pitcher Justin Verlander and his wife, actress Kate Upton.

Tylis and Porter will take over as co-presi-

dents of the board of directors of La Equidad, the club's statement said.

"Our new owners are committed to investing in key areas, including our core forces and our female team," La Equidad said in a statement.

The club did not release financial details of the purchase.

Tylis said his group's aim "is to strengthen every aspect of the club, investing for the long term and building on the strong foundation that already exists."

La Equidad is considered a small club and its Metropolitano Stadium holds only 10,000 spectators.

The team finished the latest edition of the league in 13th place.

Last year, Reynolds and McElhenney purchased a minority stake of Necaxa. □